

The Christian News-Letter

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Edited by
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BLISS

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IN CONNECTION WITH the preparatory work for the World Council of Churches there has come into our hands a number of letters and memoranda from Germany. All these would, we think, be of interest to many of our readers, but much of their value would be lost in summarizing, so we shall instead give the main substance of one memorandum. It comes from a Christian layman who before the war had many international contacts. Now he is a refugee from his university in the East and has settled in Western Germany. His memorandum is concerned with a discussion of modern technical society and the Church's task, which is a part of the study preparation for Amsterdam.

Before we give the gist of the memorandum there is something in the covering letter which merits attention. The writer says he knows full well that the condition of his country is pathological. Compared to the atmosphere which prevailed after the first war, Germany is like Dostoevsky's *House of the Dead* with distrust between man and man and total resignation to an attitude of surly silence, steadily increasing. Here is his dilemma. Germany has experienced the total collapse of a highly organized technical society, and a sociologist reflecting on this situation might perhaps have some useful observations to make. But can he make them? He is himself, he fully admits, part and

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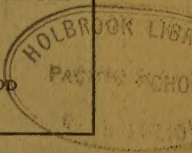
THE PRODIGAL SON OF
WESTERN CHRISTIANITY

SUPPLEMENT

JESUS SAID: "I AM THE
WAY"

BY

GEORGE MACLEOD



parcel of this pathological situation : he may try sincerely to be objective but fears his readers outside Germany may say, "This is not objective reflection, this is German self-pity wrapped up in a different form." He ends his letter in the following way, "In former times in this country there used to be a nice Rhenish story going round. A man has fallen into the river and is drowning. He shouts 'Help ! help ! I can't swim !' Tünnes (or Anthony, the typical figure of these anecdotes) is crossing the bridge, and calls to him angrily 'Why all this fuss : I can't swim either, but I'm not making all that noise'. Tünnes wasn't a modern psychologist or he would have said 'Why all this self-pity ?' but he was a good Christian, for the story says he pulled the man out. So I hope international discussion will help us to treat this matter of self-pity in a reconciling fashion."

A TECHNICAL SOCIETY DESTROYED

Now for the main substance of his memorandum :—

For the German people there is no problem of adapting themselves to technical progress. They have to deal with its sudden arrest by bombing, dismantling, and shortage.

Have the Germans then lost interest in technics ? No. Technological decay spells death and therefore everybody clutches at the hope of technical recovery. Germany is hemmed in by America and Russia, but each of these professes, in different ways, faith in the blessings provided by technology. Even the restoration of agriculture in a degree sufficient to provide enough for bare sustenance depends on technological factors. No one can see an alternative to the renewal of technical progress. It alone seems to contain the offer of life, while technical decay spells death.

There are, of course, some critics of a technical society (they use fountain-pens, typewriters and other products of technical machinery) who talk in a Rousseauist fashion about a return to nature. Seeing in the mechanization of life the cause of our loss of true community life they may look on the collapse of technics as a means to restoration. That conclusion is, however, negated by the facts. The collapse of technics has left us with all the exhausting

irritations, a daily struggle for the most elementary necessities of life in what has become largely a pre-technical, or even palaeolithic, state of existence.

This dissolution has important consequences for the Church. The old proverb that necessity is the teacher of prayer is refuted by a thousand every-day experiences. Necessity is also a powerful incentive to theft, petty quarrels, covetousness, brutal egoism and all other forms of demoralization, and these are poisoning our daily life and impeding the recovery of the very "community" the loss of which is deplored. There is very little psychological difference between the state of men living with machines and those who are deprived of them and ardently long for them. Just as a maimed body can suffer acute pain in an amputated limb, so a nation deprived of its technical equipment can experience all the diseases of mechanization. The setback of technical development does not in itself bring salvation from the moral and psychical evils regarded as typical of our technological age.

The progress of technics has imposed between man and nature an intermediate realm of mechanization which has become a kind of "second nature". What is being experienced in Germany to-day is the shattering of this "second nature". But the effect is not a return to the first nature, or to some healthy form of primitive life, but the emergence of an utterly repulsive barbarism. The barbaric elements of technics persist in a "post technical" existence, while nothing of the undeniable benefits of a simpler form of life seems to come back. The decisive lesson of the experience through which our people is passing is that a sudden arrest of technical development brings cultural and moral degeneration and moral despair and is a danger to the life of mankind.

The writer then turns to family life and says that after some wars the home has been a centre of national moral recovery. But the home life of Germany to-day is a dangerous, festering abscess that menaces the moral life with deadly infection. The separation of families through the retention of prisoners-of-war, almost three years after the end of the war, the post-war deportation or imprisonment of hundreds of thousands of politically suspect persons, the interruption

of postal communication between close relations, the absence of information about the illness or death of displaced persons—all these, and many other things, work for the disintegration of the family. It is a matter of chance whether families are united or divided: men go away to seek work. The widespread loosening of marriage bonds and immoral relations with members of the occupying forces, are an inevitable consequence of the perpetuation of war conditions long after actual hostilities have ceased.

Another cause of family demoralization is the overcrowding of a reduced and devastated national territory by nearly fourteen million persons expelled from eastern areas. All the intimacy and seclusion of the home is destroyed. Almost every home has become a small camp, swarming with people who are bound to one another by no natural or organic connections. Within families penned into rooms a few feet square overstrained nerves and demoralization, including sexual irregularities, are the result of lack of space. Family life in Germany cannot in these circumstances become a source of wholesome renewal.

Another consequence of the confusion resulting from the arrest of technical development is that society is divided, not into capitalists and proletarians but into two new groups—those who have saved their property and possess a base of social existence and the disinherited and uprooted who have lost both possessions and social position.

A giant army of discontented people, a very threatening element in national life and in the international situation, deeply disturbs both us and the occupying powers. This amorphous heap of "have-nots" will sooner or later find its spokesmen and tribunes. The problem is the subject of active discussion in Church circles in Germany and the ecumenical debate about social disorder will have to take it into account. This totally new classification of social elements renders obsolete the traditional sociological classifications, whether Marxist or non-Marxist.

But the new social group of uprooted people is not merely an interesting subject for sociological study. It is, or ought to be, the main object of the missionary energies of the

Church in Europe. The whole future of the Church may be decided by its success or failure in a Christian struggle for the uprooted men of to-day—the prodigal son of western Christianity. Uprooted men exist in all parts of the world: they are the product of a technical society. They can be mobilized and there is a secularized force which is intent on such total mobilization. Bolshevism is no less concerned than Christianity with the future of this social group, and in the competition possesses certain advantages.

Bolshevism is a global and deliberate attempt to keep men in a restless and rootless form of existence and to concentrate all their endeavours on creating a temporal paradise on earth. An ascetic discipline, inherited from Christian experience but perverted in a contrary direction, will be applied by Bolshevism in its world-wide task of diverting mankind from concern with its eternal destiny. Its chances of success are considerable. Every resource will be used to achieve an eschatological but purely secular fulfilment of man's inmost longing for salvation and redemption.

The great advantage of Bolshevism is its readiness to exploit human sincerity and to use spiritual seduction. These are, in the proper sense of the word, *diabolic* methods of influencing men, and Bolshevism is able to make use of them with a good conscience. Christianity, it must be admitted, has often in its history had recourse to such methods, but it can do it only with a bad conscience. In the present struggle between Bolshevism and Christianity the latter is exposed to the temptation of becoming infected by its adversary and imitating its methods in propaganda and action.

A second temptation is to conclude too hastily that every one who opposes the protagonists of an earthly and secularized salvation is exercising an apostolic ministry for the redemption of mankind. There are many such crusaders who, if the truth were admitted, have earthly interests closely bound up with these ambitions of world salvation. The direct identification of an anti-bolshevist attitude with the defence of Christianity is a simplification which may easily lead to hypocrisy and pharisaism. The dialectical relations between communist and anti-communist ideologies and

attitudes are much more complicated. All Christian self-deception in this matter needs to be unmasked and rejected.

The delicate and complex relations between the dynamic elements in totalitarianism and Christianity in the present world situation cannot be comprehended in simple formulae. Under the new Russian policy towards religion and the Church a pro-communist Church hierarchy and organization has been set up, inspired with characteristic bolshevist energy. Moscow has become the centre of an ardent pan-Slavism, recalling the traditional connection between national and religious expansion in Russian policy, and is becoming a very important centre of world missionary activities. This is bound to have far-reaching consequences in the ecumenical field.

Is this merely a cunning attempt to create confusion and to undermine the Christian self-confidence of Western nations? This seems to me a too simple interpretation of a very complex phenomenon. We need always to remind ourselves that there is a Christian source in Bolshevism. This radical movement has not sprung straight from a completely secularized culture but has struck its roots in the soil of a deeply religious national spirit. We can leave on one side the question whether communist leadership is capable of a sincere respect for, and genuine toleration of, the Christian faith. It is possible that these reborn Christian energies within Communism are being cynically misused by atheistic Soviet officials, but even if they are the sincerity of the Russian clergy and the missionary activities of the neo-Orthodox Church is quite another matter.

The reverberations and recreating power of this ambiguous experiment cannot be foreseen to-day. It ought not to surprise us if a re-Christianization of communist nations undertaken for merely tactical reasons were to evoke an unexpected echo from the living Christian spirit in the East. This would compel us to revise our too simple differentiation between the Christian West and the anti-Christian East. It is quite proper that we should champion the personal freedom and responsibility of western civilization against the collectivism characteristic of the East and the enslave-

ment of the individual by a totalitarian mechanization of life. But this is not a "holy war"; it is a collision between two forms of world mission, both of which are subject to the "hidden" will and judgement of the Lord of history.

To conclude: the uprooted individual, who is socially and psychologically the most arresting phenomenon of our time, is standing at the cross-roads. Faced with the prospect of a zero existence, he may take the way of nihilism and atheism, renouncing all transcendental expectations and obligations and surrendering himself completely to the realization of secular possibilities. If the modern nihilist is able to resist the temptations to cynicism, demoralization and criminality, he must be driven sooner or later to some form of Bolshevism. Soviet policy is only one of several possible forms of the bolshevist idea.

But the uprooted individual is open for another decision. He may find a new understanding of a Gospel that was proclaimed to the poor and not, in the first instance, to the rich and satisfied. Secretly, and often it may be unconsciously, he is waiting to hear a new and less pharisaical, a more sincere and radical, word from the Christian pulpit. Something in his soul is open to a new encounter with genuine Christian truth.

Are we able to predict his future attitude? He may be ready to break abruptly with all the blessings of the Constantinian era of the Church, and to return to the catacombs. It is possible that as a modern Cluniac he may challenge the worldly degeneration of the Church, and even its flirtation with technics. It may be that a sturdy orthodoxy may give him the safe standing in life which he longs for. In any case, if the prodigal son were to return, the shape and content of Church life in its traditional forms would be radically changed. Is there in religious circles a hidden fear of this contingency? Would it be more comfortable in the Church without him? Is not the simplest thing to do to label him a communist, in order to silence his irritating voice? Does the Church really feel its peculiar responsibility in the present world juncture in which there is an unparalleled shaking of the traditional social order? Even

the symptoms of the awful demoralization in Germany, which I have frankly pictured, could be understood as elements in a higher purpose of God to awaken the Church and to save other peoples from so deep a fall.

The Church would of course fail in the attempt to reach the uprooted and despairing man if its preaching were to continue in the fetters of dogmatism, traditionalism and formalism. It could fail by a cheap romanticism, for example, by brushing aside the bitter distress of the prodigal's physical condition. But the Church can fail also by an exaggerated adaptation to the supposed mentality of the modern man. An accentuated modernity in the presentation of the Word may have a contrary effect to what is desired. The prodigal son of the technical age is not going to be attracted, but rather repelled by the introduction of technical improvements into worship or parochial life resulting from exaggerating the importance of organization. The first lesson to be learned from our special experience in Germany is the need for regaining as quickly as possible a quiet disinterestedness towards the technical aspects of our life. We shall be glad if our peculiar German experiences could in any way further the ecumenical discussion about man's disorder in a technical society and God's design.

THE SUPPLEMENT

This week's Supplement is by Dr. George MacLeod. We are glad to publish it immediately after that of Professor Hodges, because Dr. MacLeod describes the experience of many Christians whose Christian thinking has to meet the impact of secular thinking about the world.

Dr. George MacLeod left the Parish of Govan, Glasgow, in 1938 to start with others the Iona Community. They were impressed, during the depression years in a shipyard district, with the failure of the Church to make the Gospel relevant to modern man's needs. For three months the Community, composed of craftsmen and ministers, engage in the rebuilding of the Abbey, the ministers working half the day as labourers to the craftsmen. They seek to discover on the Island under the discipline of a common life

together, the truth in worship and in theology, and the nature of the Christian fellowship. The other nine months of the year ministers and craftsmen take their place in the ordinary work of the Church and of the world on the mainland. A young minister joining the Community has an obligation of two years' service in a team ministry. The majority of members subsequently remain members of the Community, meeting monthly and obeying a common rule of life. The whole Community is gathered on the Island only for a week each summer. At the moment, says Dr. MacLeod, they are embarrassed by the wide interest in their small venture elsewhere and concerned at the comparatively small number of young ministers in the Church of Scotland joining their membership. There are at present thirty-two ministers and six laymen in the Community.

The Iona Youth Trust, formed in 1943, is a parallel movement recognized by the Church of Scotland Youth Committee as its official experimental centre for youth over the age of seventeen in the West of Scotland. This Trust is making three parish experiments in integrating youth work in the normal life of the parish. At its Community House in Glasgow it has a chapel, restaurant, and class rooms. Last autumn nearly six hundred young people were attending classes there. On the Island last summer 450 young people—fifty a week—held summer holiday conferences.

The Community also runs a camp for Borstal boys on the Island of Mull, giving the lads a week of freedom while they are still serving their terms. Dr. MacLeod is Chairman of the Scottish Central Council for After-Care set up by the Secretary of State for Scotland.

An outline of the movement is contained in his book *We Shall Rebuild*.¹ There is also a forty page pamphlet² on *Evangelism: the Thesis and Practice of the Iona Community*.

Kathleen Bliss

¹ Price 3s. 6d. Discussed in C.N.-L. No. 227.

² Price 1s. Both may be obtained from the Iona Community Publishing Department, 214 Clyde Street, Glasgow, C. 1.

JESUS SAID, "I AM THE WAY"

A Sermon preached in King's College Chapel, Aberdeen

By the Rev. GEORGE MACLEOD

My subject this morning might be called "Dr. Fisher: Dr. Barnes: and Dr. Schweitzer", or, if you like, "The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Birmingham and the Missionary of Lambaréné in Africa," and their three different ways of coming at the Faith in our day. If you wish it stated in less personal terms, my subject is the confusion that exists between the classical approach to our Faith, and the scientific; my object is to sketch what we may do about it now in this present time. Before embarking let me hasten to say, to prevent an unbearable misapprehension, that my purpose is *not* to attempt a synthesis between "Revealed Religion" and "Modern Science". Such would take many sermons; indeed, part of my thesis is that not even many sermons would achieve it. My concern is with what a Christian can do about this confusion between the classical and the scientific approach in view of the very fact that it cannot at present be resolved.

But, first, the issue. Dr. Barnes wrote a book. At a meeting of bishops, Dr. Fisher made two equally ominous comments; that the book was incompatible with the teaching of the Church of England and that he did not propose to take any action against Bishop Barnes. What in effect did the condemned book say? Dr. Barnes, having claimed to make a scientific approach, in the main denies the Virgin Birth, the Resurrection of Christ's body, the Ascension and the miracles. He denies, that is to say, that any of these were historic events in the sense that the Battle of Trafalgar was an historic event. What is left? Well, the notion that Christ was a very good man who preached socialism, pacifism and internationalism, was sustained by God's indwelling presence and held constant communion with God. Christ was a very good man; but in this sense of good, he argues, there have been lots of good people in the world, though perhaps none quite so good as Jesus Christ. We are not, in other words, entitled to say that Christ was divine in some sense that other good men are not divine. Such is the main contention of Dr. Barnes.

In essence I suppose the reply of the Archbishop would be the official reply of the historic Churches—confessedly a rather oblique reply : (1) that it is inconceivable that any so dim and dessicated a view of Christ could possibly have turned the world upside down, as Christianity in historical fact has turned it upside down for the last two thousand years ; (2) that wherever the Church has attempted to come to terms with science by denying all its own miraculous claims it has not in fact won the support of scientists, or made it easier for them to believe, or assisted a revival of Faith. Rather has it drawn their contempt ; (3) that to accept Dr. Barnes's position is in fact *either* to reduce God to the realm of the known, and, as the French say, if you define God you are finished with Him, *or* to leave God no more revealed than He was before Christ came. In either event it is to cripple the Sacraments, to make our prayer irrational and the worship of Christ's Name a meaningless performance. Therefore the Church in the main renounces such conclusions, still stands by the historic statement concerning Christ, whatever difficulties that may create, and asks men by Faith to declare in the words of the Nicene Creed : "I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ : the only Begotten Son of God, Begotten of his Father before all worlds : God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten not made : Being of one substance with the Father, by Whom all things were made. Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man." In the main the Church stands by that position. Such must suffice for an outline of the problem.

On the one hand we have a scientist Bishop giving his life to commend the Faith to the modern mind, and apparently losing out in the process. On the other we have a traditional Archbishop declaring the Church's adherence to the pre-scientific position. If that is all there is to it, the rest of this sermon should correctly confine itself to roundly condemning Bishop Barnes ; to an excursion into what the early creeds really meant ; and (by implication) a declaration by the Church that it does not matter what new thought is discovered, or how much our intellectual atmosphere changes, the ancient creeds (and the philosophy behind those creeds) will prove sufficient for all time. It is as if to say, the children of men can play with any new toys

they like, but for their nourishment they will come back at last to old Mother Church, with her old-fashioned, but never out of date, recipes for salvation. I say if that is all there is to it we could exclude Bishop Barnes and continue in placid acceptance.

HALF DOUBT AND HALF BELIEF

But is that all there is to it? If that is all, why did not the Convocation of Canterbury produce bell, book, and candle, and show Bishop Barnes to the door? Why do they leave him with a diocese to teach? Well, I suppose the real reason is because of you and me. For it is our problem too, isn't it? Let me put it to you. When you are quite honest with yourself, do you believe that, in the same sense as the Battle of Trafalgar was an historic event, Christ on a certain afternoon in about A.D. 31 once took five loaves and two fishes and fed 5,000 people? Do you believe that after His death and resurrection He ate fish in the presence of the disciples? Do you believe that He was once, in His risen body, taken out of their sight into the clouds at His ascension? If you cannot at this moment give an unhesitating "Yes" to such questions, then you must have sympathy for what Bishop Barnes is trying to do. You may not be quite like the Elder of the Church of Scotland, as by law established, headmaster of a school of 250 children and responsible for their Bible education, who said recently, "the trouble is that Bishop Barnes is quite right." You may not be quite like him, but are you a little like him?

Or let me put the same question to you from the other end. When you think of who Christ was, is it a satisfactory summary to your type of mind to say that "Jesus Christ was begotten of his Father before all worlds; begotten not made: being of one substance with the Father by Whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary; and was made man?" Do you find yourself saying an unhesitating "Yes" to that? Or do you have to hedge it about and say, "Well, on Sundays I can do a kind of intellectual summersault. . . and dress up my mind in the kind of clothes they wore at Nicaea in the fourth century. . . . For the splendid place it gives to Christ, which I think Christ should have . . . for the kind of things it means to say, I can bring myself to say the Nicene Creed"?

If that is more your mood than an unhesitating "Yes" would be, then you must have sympathy for the Archbishop of Canterbury. Indeed, if you half agree with that Elder and half agree with the Archbishop in the convocation of your mind, then you have joined the Convocation of Bishops. You are saying Barnes is wrong in his conclusions, but right in his exertions, so we will reprimand him, but we daren't quite get rid of him. But it is hardly a halting place, is it? We can't let it rest there. You know the real reason why so many thinking people have left the Church in recent decades? You know the real reason why folk do not flock to Easter services as they used to do, and why the Easter hymns swell louder on the organ than on the lips of worshippers? Ultimately it is because this essential problem of what we believe about Christ is unresolved. We cannot leave it there.

THREE PRACTICAL TASKS

There seem to me three things you can do. The first is negative but important. It is, don't close your mind to the search as to who Christ is for you. "He who ceases to be better ceases to be good" is an old Latin tag; and it is equally true that he who ceases to deepen his belief may cease to believe at all. In India once there was a devout Hindu lad who was also a brilliant medical student. When the season came for his pilgrimage to Benares and for his immersion in the Holy River Ganges he took a young Scottish friend with him to the Festival. The Scot marvelled at the devotion with which this educated Hindu dipped seven times in the filthy waters of the Ganges. Afterwards he took a specimen of this Holy River to their laboratory. He bade the young Hindu (now with his lab. jacket on) look through the microscope and as a scientist inspect this so-called Holy Water. The Hindu was scientist enough to see that the Holy Water was seething with the germs of cholera and plague. So what did the Hindu do? Why, he smashed the microscope! and gave up science. A tragedy you will agree. Now the discrepancies between Christianity and scientific discovery are not so great as the discrepancies between Hinduism and scientific discovery. Yet I fear in this country there are numberless men who, faced with the same alternatives, have not smashed the microscope;

rather have they dismissed the Bible. Do not then give up the effort to close the gap.

There was a nineteenth-century professor in a Scottish University who used to say when he entered the laboratory he closed the door of his Church, and when he entered his Church he closed the door of his laboratory. That is a makeshift that cannot be allowed to stand in our day. All truth is one; the Faith and the facts cannot ultimately be dissociated. It is the extent to which our civilization has tacitly followed that professor that is partly the cause of our bankrupt culture to-day. We have tried to keep the spiritual and the material in watertight compartments till our material world is on the point of disaster by explosion and our spiritual concerns are like to die from anaemia.

First then, don't close your mind to the agonizing search as to who Christ is for you. But that is at best negative advice. My second advice is no more than neutral. It is not to get too distressed. There *are* new bridges being thrown to-day over what seemed the unbridgable ravine that separated revealed religion from nineteenth-century science. It is ten years ago since a clergyman of the Church of England said to me: "The trouble about Barnes is that he is using the discredited science of his grandfather to refute the discredited religion of his grandmother." I bid you worry then about his essential problem, for it remains a problem, but I would not advise you to worry about Dr. Barnes's actual book. There is a real sense in which he is still engaged in valiant battle on a field long since deserted by all the other combatants on either side. On the one hand, science has moved in large areas from an implied atheism to a reverent agnosticism. On the other, the most significant religious thinkers are moving to a position which need not remove the miraculous from the claims of Faith.

In a Welsh town recently I sought to get a copy of a certain book called *The Will of God in the Present Crisis*. The bookseller with unconscious significance replied, "I am sorry; *The Will of God* is rebinding just now". New bridges *are* being thrown. The time is coming when acceptance of the full Faith need not carry with it a defiance of scientific principles. So my second advice is do not be too depressed as if the problem itself were for ever intractable.

But there is the final word to be said, a word that is wholly positive. There remains *the object* of this sermon, which is what to do about the dilemma, now in this present time, when certainly the new synthesis has not yet been worked out, and we have our full lives to live. And it is here that I leave behind the champions alike of classical tradition and the purely scientific, and I take you to Lambaréné in Africa, to Schweitzer *who carries in himself the synthesis*. There you find one of the most brilliant intellects of our age working as a doctor among the backward tribes of an African swamp, healing their diseases and ceaselessly telling them the story of Jesus Christ our Lord. One of the greatest commentators, perhaps, on the nineteenth-century philosophers; that was Schweitzer's reputation at the turn of our century. But not content with that, he became the greatest living authority on the life and significance of the great musician John Sebastian Bach. Here obviously you have a first-class mind and heart. It was only when these two accomplishments were completed that he fully turned his mind to the Person of Jesus Christ. I choose him for our final figure because from a different angle he went at precisely the same problem as Dr. Barnes, and with a similar courage. He was modern enough not to be satisfied with the ancient creeds, scientist enough to go to the sources regardless of what they might bring forth, and he produced a book called *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. In its day it was just as heretical and unorthodox as anything Barnes has ever written. It discomfited alike the fundamentalist and the liberal. He renounced, as unworkable for our day, the whole philosophy from which the ancient creeds were written. The book has still, by orthodox standards, a totally unorthodox conclusion.

But what was the result for him of demolishing the ancient structures, of declaring, for instance, that what the Church seems to teach about the second coming simply cannot be accepted by modern man? Was the result cynicism? Did he escape into his heart—return to the music he so passionately loved? Did he escape into his mind—return to the philosophies that fascinated his intellect? No. Through faithful demolition and by the utter integrity of science, there began to stand out for him a Christ more resplendent than in any ancient creed,

whom he could only call at first "The Great Unknown". But he also plumbed the secret by which alone modern man can find him. It is not by pure intellect, ancient or modern, he asserts, for Christ is only to be found in our day by following. Christ for our day must be the Way, before we can define the Truth of Him again. Here is the great conclusion of his book: "Christ comes to us," he writes, "as one unknown without a name, as of old He came by the lake side to the disciples who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same word: 'Follow thou Me,' and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. He commands, and to those who obey Him He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and, as an ineffable mystery they shall learn in their own experience *who He is*." "He that doeth the will . . . he shall know of the doctrine." For Schweitzer, the place to find the toils and suffering was Africa. Africa, whose peoples the West had so illtreated, was the place where Christ seemed to be suffering most. So he left his beloved books, his music and his reputation, and went to make amends in Africa for your sins and for mine. And while you and I still so largely ponder and debate, Schweitzer is ever more convinced that Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords. He has his organ there but not to swell the certainty of the Easter hymns.

It seems likely enough that in the next decade we need not look as far as Africa for a new place of Christ's toils and conflicts. Christ is going to suffer here. And once more He is asking us "Lovest thou Me?" It becomes ever more urgent that we answer right. Yet, do not first be overborne by the problems of intellectual unravelling. Their solution is denied our age. Nor need we stand uncertain. "Christ commands," says the Missionary of Lambaréné, "and to those who obey Him He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which we shall pass through in His fellowship. And, as an ineffable mystery, we shall learn in our own experience *who He is*." Only a Church that has suffered again can dare to rewrite the Nicene Creed—such a Church will do so.

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